

JOHNSON CITY MTPO
Minutes of the Executive Board / Executive Staff Meeting
Friday, December 20, 2019 at 11:00 a.m.
137 West Market Street, Johnson City, TN
Johnson City Transit Center, Training Room

Executive Board Present

The Honorable Mayor Jenny Brock, City of Johnson City, Chair
Jon Hartman for the Honorable Mayor Curt Alexander, City of Elizabethton
Bob Browning for the Honorable Mayor Chuck Vest, Town of Jonesborough
The Honorable Mayor Johnny Lynch, Town of Unicoi
The Honorable Mayor Rusty Barnett, Carter County
Ronda Sawyer for the Honorable Governor Bill Lee, State of Tennessee
Johnny Deakins, Jr., Tennessee County Highway Officials Association

Executive Board Not Present

The Honorable Mayor Irene Wells, Town of Bluff City
The Honorable Mayor Joe Grandy, Washington County

Executive Staff Present

Bob Wilson for M. Denis Peterson, City of Johnson City
Bob Browning, Town of Jonesborough
Jeff Rawles for Eldonna Janutolo, Johnson City Transit
Ronda Sawyer, Tennessee Department of Transportation
Johnny Deakins, Jr., Washington County Highway Department

Executive Staff Not Present

The Honorable Mayor Irene Wells, Town of Bluff City
Daniel Estes, City of Elizabethton
Debbie Kessler, Town of Unicoi
Roger Colbaugh, Carter County Highway Department
Chris Craig, First Tennessee Development District

Others Attending

Glenn Berry, Johnson City MTPO
Mary Butler, Johnson City MTPO
Mike Potter, Elizabethton
Matthew Balogh, Elizabethton
Ambre Torbett, Sullivan County
Emily Wood, NET Trans
Ashley Davies, TDOH
Troy Ebbert, TDOT
Jason Farmer, TDOT
Sam Ford, BrightRidge
Randy Dodson, Mattern & Craig
Michael Eades, RK & K
Rueben Robertson, LDA Engineering

Summary of Motions:

- **Approved** – Minutes from August 28, 2019;
- **Approved – Resolution 2019-03** – Approved resolution to self-certify the metropolitan transportation planning process for the Johnson City MTPO that must accompany the adoption of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP);
- **Approved** – Approved for the Chair to sign the Memorandum of Agreement to define the need for Amendments and Administrative Modifications to the TIP; and
- **Approved – Resolution 2019-04** – Approved resolution to adopt the Fiscal Years 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP);
- **Approved – Resolution 2019-05** – Approved resolution to support Safety (PM1) Performance Targets by TDOT; and
- **Approved** – Approved the endorsement of prioritized projects for TDOT’s Three-Year Work Program.

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 11:13 a.m. by the Chair, the Honorable Mayor Jenny Brock.

Agenda Item 1: Chair Mayor Brock asked for introductions from those present in the back of the room. Mr. Glenn Berry proceeded to ask if there were any comments from the public. Ms. Ashely Davies with the Tennessee Department of Health announced there was a new grant opportunity for Healthy Communities available and to contact if interested.

Agenda Item 2: The minutes from the August 28, 2019 meeting were reviewed.

Mr. Johnny Deakins, Jr. made a motion for the board to approve the minutes of the August 28, 2019 meeting. Mr. Bob Browning seconded the motion. All approved. **Motion carried.**

Agenda Item 3: Consider approval of a resolution to self-certify the metropolitan transportation planning process for the Johnson City MTPO that must accompany the adoption of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Mr. Glenn Berry explained that the TIP can't be adopted until the MPO has self-certified that the metropolitan planning process was carried out according to the Federal laws and regulations.

The Honorable Mayor Johnny Lynch made a motion for the board to approve the resolution to self-certify the metropolitan planning process. Mr. Jon Hartman seconded the motion. All approved. **Motion carried.**

Agenda Item 4: Consider approval of the Chair to sign the Memorandum of Agreement to define the need for Amendments and Administrative Modifications to the Transportation Improvement Program.

Mr. Berry explained that this Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is renewed during each TIP cycle and defines the thresholds between amendments and administrative modifications (formerly called adjustments). The signed MOA will be included in the TIP.

Ms. Ronda Sawyer made a motion for the board to approve of the Chair to sign the Memorandum of Agreement. The Honorable Mayor Rusty Barnett seconded the motion. All approved. **Motion carried.**

Agenda Item 5: Consider approval of a resolution to adopt the Fiscal Years 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Mr. Berry showed a presentation to explain an overview of the TIP. He was happy to report that Congress had repealed the rescission that was due to take back over \$7 billion dollars in highway funding. He reviewed the local projects funding with the Johnson City MTPO's allocation of Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds. He also explained the funding shortfall for the Knob Creek Road project and that the city of Johnson City is looking at trying to reduce the cost of the project in order to find enough funding for construction. He also stated that Elizabethton had applied for a Transportation Alternatives grant to repair the Covered Bridge, and that grant awards will be announced by May 2020.

Mayor Barnett asked about the State Route 91 project. Specifically, he had heard concerns from citizens and business owners regarding the proposed changes for the "triangle" intersection of Elk, Roan, and Broad Streets. Mr. Berry asked Mr. Troy Ebbert who would be the best contact. Mr. Ebbert referred the question to Jason Farmer from TDOT. He stated that Mayor Barnett could contact the Elizabethton office and they can show him the plans and go over any concerns with him.

Mr. Hartman asked about the alternatives being considered for the Knob Creek project. Mr. Berry explained that Johnson City is diligently exploring alternatives to lower the cost of the project. He further stated that

the City of Johnson City had requested the engineer of record to contact CSX railroad about the possibility of extending the road to an at-grade railroad crossing, rather than building a bridge. Mayor Brock stated she had been informed this option looked optimistic but further discussions would be necessary. Washington County Highway Superintendent, Johnny Deakins, stated CSX often asked the county to be involved with at-grade railroad crossings. Mayor Brock stated it is good that everyone involved in the project was aware of the issue and wanted to work together. Mr. Berry stated he had been contacted by TDOT about the other section of Knob Creek Road from just north of Mizpah Hills Drive to Boones Creek Road, known as "SR-XXX" and they wanted to coordinate and discuss with the city and county on the typical cross section for both sections of Knob Creek Road. Mr. Berry stated TDOT would be setting up a call after the first of the year.

The final project discussed was the Jonesborough Parkway which had been included in two previous Metropolitan Transportation Plans. He stated TDOT was preparing a report on the project; however, the studies for projects in the IMPROVE Act had a higher priority, but he had been informed by TDOT Nashville the study was underway.

Mr. Berry stated that since the funding for the Knob Creek Project being managed by Johnson City from Mizpah Hills to Marketplace Boulevard and the Jonesborough Parkway did not have funding identified at this time, they would be listed in the 2020-2023 TIP as illustrative projects.

Mr. Browning made a motion for the board to adopt the Fiscal Years 2020-2023 TIP. Mr. Hartman seconded the motion. All approved. **Motion carried.**

Agenda Item 6: Consider approval of a resolution to support Safety (PM1) Performance Targets by TDOT.

Mr. Berry explained that the safety performance targets are not meant to endorse that number of people dying on the roads in Tennessee. He said it would be wonderful if the number could be 0. TDOT goes through a lengthy process with a formula to calculate the targets. Ms. Mary Butler provided a handout that explains the target justification process. Mr. Berry explained that the Executive Board will vote to support TDOT on their targets.

Mayor Lynch made a motion for the board to approve the resolution to support the Safety (PM1) Performance Targets by TDOT. Mr. Bob Wilson seconded the motion. All approved. **Motion carried.**

Agenda Item 7: Consider endorsement of prioritized projects for TDOT's Three-Year Work Program.

Mr. Berry went over the projects that were provided by TDOT for their next Three-Year Work Program. The Executive Board was asked to rank one project, the new state route along Knob Creek Road from Mizpah Hills to Boones Creek Road; however, the MTPO staff added the Jonesborough Parkway as a second project to the list, knowing that it's been considered for an environmental study with TDOT. The Jonesborough Parkway has been included in the last two Long Range Plans.

In addition to ranking two projects for the Johnson City MTPO, the Kingsport MTPO requested that we support three of their projects that would benefit the region as a whole. They are: completing SR 36 as a five-lane highway from SR 75 to I-81; establishment of ITS along the entire I-26 corridor; and improvements to the I-81/I-26 interchange. MTPO staff provided a recommendation of the two project rankings; the Kingsport projects will not be ranked.

Mr. Deakins made a motion for the board to approve the project rankings as recommended (SR-XXX Knob Creek project being number 1 and the Jonesborough Parkway being number 2) for TDOT's Three-Year Work Program. Mr. Jon Hartman seconded the motion. All approved. **Motion carried.**

Agenda Item 8: Annual Listing of Obligated Projects.

Mr. Berry went over the handout for the annual listing of obligated projects. He said that Ms. Butler created the graphic summarizing the listing. He noted that there was \$22.4 million in federal funds obligated this year. There are a total of 32 projects and 17 projects were closed out. He wanted to note that some projects on the list were completed many years ago and are now being closed out. For some, that means funds in red are returned to the pot, to be obligated somewhere else. He also mentioned the graphic shows how many of each different project type are listed.

Agenda Item 9: Other Business

Mr. Berry mentioned all items had been covered and reminded everyone the federal government including US DOT had been funded until September 30, 2020. There was discussion about the upcoming 2020 Census and how important it is for everyone to be counted. Mr. Berry also announced that there is a public meeting coming up on January 7 for the I-26 Multimodal Corridor Study in Kingsport. Ms. Butler passed out a flyer to the members.

Adjourn: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:52 a.m.